
WESTERN BALKAN
GYBN
STATEMENT
WB IS FULL OF
BIODIVERSITY
HOME
NATURAL HERITAGE
SKILLS
KNOWLEDGE
RESOURCES
OPPORTUNITIES
ACTION FOR NATURE
BIODIVERSITY EDUCATION
GENERATOR
PARTICIPATION IN SHAPING THE FUTURE
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
BIODIVERSITY MONITORING
COMMITEMENT IMPLEMENTATION
COP17
YEREVAN ARMENIA
TAKING ACTION FOR NATURE
19-30 OCTOBER 2026
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WE ARE READY TO LEARN!
WE ARE READY TO CONTRIBUTE!
WE ARE READY TO ACT!
HADDY 2026

Statement - GYBN WB

We are speaking on behalf of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network Western Balkans, representing young people from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

The Western Balkans is a region of extraordinary natural richness. Within a relatively small area, our region is home to diverse mountain landscapes, forests, rivers and wetlands, karst ecosystems, coastal and marine environments, and a remarkable diversity of species, including many found nowhere else in the world.

For the young people of our region, biodiversity is part of the places where we live, learn and grow. It shapes our communities, cultures and livelihoods, and connects us to the landscapes we call home.

From the Western Balkans, young people are asking for more than a seat at the table. We are asking for the knowledge, skills, resources and opportunities to take meaningful action for nature.

Protecting this natural heritage requires more than raising awareness. It requires people who are equipped with the knowledge and skills to understand complex environmental challenges, work across disciplines and turn knowledge into action.

We therefore call for biodiversity education that goes beyond the classroom, education that provides practical experience, strengthens the connection between natural, social and economic sciences, develops skills for emerging green and blue jobs, and creates opportunities for young people to engage directly in biodiversity research, conservation and policy.

We also call for meaningful youth participation across all levels of biodiversity decision-making. Young people should have access to information and have opportunities to contribute to consultations, working groups, legislation, strategies and implementation plans, not simply as participants, but as active contributors to the decisions that shape our shared future.

This requires stronger connections between universities, civil society, youth and student organizations, researchers, local communities, media and policy and decision-makers. It requires opportunities for young people to contribute to scientific research, biodiversity monitoring and the implementation of regional, national and local biodiversity commitments.

At the same time, we must create space for youth-led action - supporting initiatives that emerge from local communities, encouraging young people to engage in local decision-making, and connecting local action with wider networks of young people working for biodiversity.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework calls for change. For young people, this means creating the conditions that allow us not only to participate in that change, but to help shape and deliver it.

The Western Balkans has extraordinary natural heritage worth protecting. Our generation is ready to contribute to that protection, but meaningful action requires investment in people, knowledge, opportunities and trust.

We are ready to learn. We are ready to contribute. And we are ready to act.

Thank you.